

## **Parking Standards for New Development Task Force Meeting #1**

April 9, 2014

7:00pm to 9:00pm

City Council Workroom

### **MEETING SUMMMARY**

#### **Task Force Members in Attendance**

Nathan Macek, Chairperson

Kerry Donley, Transportation Commission Representative

James Lewis, Traffic and Parking Board

John Gosling, Former Old Town Area Parking Study Work Group

Michael Workosky, NAIOP, The Commercial Real Estate Development Association

Stewart Bartley, Mixed-Use Developer

Andrea Hamre, At-Large Alexandria Resident

Danielle Fidler, At-Large Alexandria Resident

Cathy Puskar, At-Large Alexandria Resident

#### **Absent**

None

#### **City Staff**

Faroll Hamer, Director, P&Z

Sandra Marks, Acting Deputy Director, T&ES

Carrie Beach, Division Chief, P&Z

Faye Dastgheib, Parking Coordinator, T&ES

Brandi Collins, Urban Planner III, P&Z

Amy Friedlander, Urban Planner, P&Z

Ari Giles, Intern, P&Z

#### **Agenda Items**

1. Welcome & Introductions
2. Parking Study Process, Role of Task Force
3. Background:
  - a. Demographics and trends
  - b. Existing parking policies and practices
4. Discussion
5. Next Steps

#### **CALL TO ORDER - 7:08 pm**

#### **DISCUSSION**

##### *Welcome and Introductions*

- Ms. Hamer made introductions to the group and project.

- The Task Force members, City staff, and community members introduced themselves.

### *Expert Panel Recap and Discussion*

Chairperson Nate Macek facilitated a discussion among the Task Force regarding what people learned or found notable about the topic. Comments included:

- Bundling/unbundling of parking, affordability of housing, pressure on on-street parking, parking management and operations, better utilization of existing supply without building new parking spaces, and valet parking.
- From a developer perspective, it is important to unbundle parking because of competition with other jurisdictions that unbundle parking and that it is hard to sell product that is more expensive in Alexandria than in Arlington, even with available parking.
- Parking supply is not the issue; the issue is people not being aware of where parking is located.
- Shared parking can be a difficult proposition in any residential parking project, need to have a baseline supply dedicated to residents at all times, but should explore the idea.
- Parking ratios based on location
- Vehicle parking at Del Ray Central never filled up but they could have easily quadrupled bike parking spaces.
- It was made clear from the discussion that metro access is important but access to amenities is also important.
- Creating zones for various parking ratios would be helpful.
- Price differential between on-street and off-street spaces push people to make different decisions, choices.
- There is concern with regard to the zone option as there is great need to keep the rules relatively simple so people can easily understand what they are; as exemplified by Old Town's former standards which caused confusion.
- View on-street parking a public commodity, not as a "right"; look to create regulations that try to preserve parking for the existing and future residents.

Mr. Macek reminded the group to be mindful of the scope of work, while on-street parking policies are part of this issue; the primary task is to look at parking standards for new residential development. Carshare and Bikeshare may be considered but they do not take up as much space as vehicular parking, so those two programs are easier to negotiate with developers.

Staff informed the Task Force that Bike Parking Standards for New Development policy was just updated.

### *Staff Presentation*

Carrie Beach (PZ) and Faye Dastgheib (TES) provided a presentation on goals of the study, role of the Task Force, demographics and trends, Alexandria parking standards and policies, and methodology of the parking study. The presentation can be viewed on the project webpage at [http://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/planning/info/Parking\\_Standards\\_Task\\_Force/2014-04-09%20Parking%20MTG%20PPT%20FINAL.pdf](http://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/planning/info/Parking_Standards_Task_Force/2014-04-09%20Parking%20MTG%20PPT%20FINAL.pdf).

During and following the staff presentation, members of the Task Force asked questions and provided comments. Mr. Macek facilitated the discussion below:

- Question: How does Arlington County's vehicle ownership compare to Alexandria? Staff responded that they would bring that information to the next meeting.
- Question: Is commuting data available to provide where Alexandrians go to work? Staff responded that they would look at that but generally 80% of people come in to Alexandria to work and 80% of people leave Alexandria to work.
- Comment: Alexandria's parking ratio used to include visitor parking but now visitor parking (15%) is added on top of the parking ratio. A recent development project met the standard ratio but had to ask for a parking reduction because the parking didn't meet the 15% visitor on top of the standard. The recommended ratio that the Task Force recommends should include visitor parking.
- Question: Were the restrictions placed on Residential Parking Permit (RPP) for new development projects intended to be in perpetuity? Ms. Dastgheib replied that they are in perpetuity.
- Question: What is the rationale for changing the City's policy of prohibiting residents of new multi-family developments from receiving RPP permits to allowing them to receive RPP permits? Ms. Marks said that the policy to prohibit new residents from getting RPP permits at the time of the policy inception appeared to be a good tool to address the concerns of existing residents that new residents would tax the existing on-street parking supply. However, the outcomes of the policy have not been what staff anticipated and thus staff is moving forward with new techniques and tools. Ms. Hamer added that there's an inherent unfairness to the prevention of people to get RPP permits.
- Question: How do you deal with the perception that unbundling results in fewer available parking spaces for housing units with no off-street parking options? What does the data show actually happens? What do car tax records show as to who is registered in a building versus who parks in that building? Mr. Macek added that the City Council recently approved the issuance of visitor parking passes to residents of RPP restricted developments.
- Question: How do block faces along RPP restricted buildings have parking restrictions if the residents have to petition to put the signs up? Ms. Dastgheib replied that most don't have restrictions but that Chatham Square was an exception.
- Question: Has any block in District 12 (BRAC) opted out of having restriction signage. Ms. Dastgheib replied that no one had so far.
- Question: Do you need an Alexandria tax decal to park in District 12 from 8-5pm? Ms. Dastgheib replied you do need one.
- Comment: There are issues surrounding the overnight parking district because there are simply too many cars per household. In the 1960s when the cars per household average was closer to 1, but that now people have more cars If you register your car in Alexandria you can park in the overnight district People thought overnight parking districts would help solve parking problems but it doesn't actually help. Walkability issues apply to Old Town/Potomac Yard, but that there are a lot of places in the City that are still suburban and are not comparable.

- Ms. Marks reiterated that staff is discussing all of these issues because it is important to understand the context in order to talk about new development standards, residential parking districts work well in some contexts but not in all. For example, development in Lynhaven caused people to want a residential zone but in that situation it won't solve the issue because it's not creating more parking, City requires certain thresholds to put in the zone. City did parking count, did not meet threshold, so there will not be a zone there.
- Question: Has the City looked at how many people have curb cuts/off-street parking options and on-street permits? Ms. Marks responded while it can be looked into, it is most important to understand that the pricing of the commodity has to be right to provide disincentive to people to park on street.
- Question: Can the city provide data on buildings with RPP restrictions? Ms. Dastgheib responded that staff has that data and will share.
- Comment: From a developer's perspective, developers want tenants to pay for the parking spaces built for residents, so perhaps the RPP restriction for new developments should remain an option.
- Comment: Residential parking zones are actually more like 10am-3pm because of enforcement and 2 hour limits, not 8-5pm.
- Question: Why is the deadline for some metered zones 5pm and other places 7pm? Ms. Marks replied that in the proposed budget, they are recommending extending the time to 9pm everywhere as good parking management practice.
- Question: How does the City decide to put meters in certain places and not others? Ms. Dastgheib responded that meters are not usually installed in front of any ground floor residential use buildings. Ms. Marks added that additional blocks don't have meters but will be added with additional funding and that meters are to ensure turnover, priced correctly.
- Question: Were meters installed at Montgomery Center? Ms. Dastgheib responded that OTAPS recommended talking with residents and retailers before installing meters.
- Question: Where will the Task Force's final recommendation "live"? Will the recommendations supersede existing zoning regulations, coordinated development district guidelines, small area plan recommendations? Ms. Hamer said that the group can discuss that issue.
- Question: Can staff provide a map of the subject area showing the geographic areas that the recommendations will impact? Ms. Hamer responded that staff can bring a map of the small area plans in the City or a growth opportunities map.
- Citizen commented that the absolute number of bus routes doesn't reflect the frequency of service. Frequency of service along a given corridor is the important factor.
- Question: How will the factor of "proximity to neighborhood service" be incorporated into methodology? Ms. Dastgheib replied that there's no single weight applied to that factor. Staff has metrics for each site, but that they haven't been weighted against each other yet. During the next meeting, we will discuss data. Walkability score was included as one of the factors. Transit is not included in walk score.
- Question: Has taxi service been looked at as a factor impacting parking demand? Ms. Dastgheib responded that it can be.
- Question: Are TMPs and bedroom mix for developments included in the data analysis? Ms. Dastgheib responded that those are included.

- Question: Are any of the sites next to each other, over-representing one area or another, double overflow onto street parking? Ms. Beach responded that a variety of sites, building construction ages, housing types, distances to metro were included.
- Question: Was residential occupancy factored in (vacancy rates)? Ms. Dastgheib responded that is included.
- Question: Is bundling/unbundling of parking a factor? Ms. Dastgheib responded yes.
- Question: Are the parking space counts as-built or approved? Ms. Dastgheib said they assumed that they would have the same number of spaces as approved, but could check.
- Question: Is density a factor? Ms. Dastgheib said that can be included.
- Question: Did getting access to the garages impact the City's ability to survey? Ms. Dastgheib responded that that wasn't an issue. Ms. Beach added that staff can add Clark Ewart's property data to the list as well.
- Comment: It would be helpful if staff could be as transparent as possible with the data and view the Task Force as an extension of staff. If there are things that need to be obscured, they could be separated out.
- Comment: The cost of rent per unit is an important factor, particularly because of the various ages of the buildings, also demographics. Ms. Marks responded that we looked at rent versus ownership, but since that can change over time we can't distinguish them for this study. Ms. Hamer added that some new product types are affordable.
- Question: Is the group looking at any affordable housing complexes that came forward in the last year? It would be helpful to know use patterns on older garden apartments (both affordable and market rate) and how they vary from new development replacing them.
- Question: Is visitor parking information included? Ms. Dastgheib responded that the parking counts were done after 10pm on weeknights. Visitors would park on street or in garage, so on-street parking data collection was completed within 0.2 miles of the development. Therefore, the data that was collected should include all occupancy data.
- Question: How did people getting to work by taxi or rideshare get included? Ms. Dastgheib responded that staff didn't look at taxi service, but can do that. Ms. Marks added that whole city is served by taxi and car ownership is not one-to-one relationship to the way that people get to work, people could own cars but go to work by metro.
- Question: Is the group trying to figure out how many people are going to want to have a car in a residential building or on the street and is the group trying to look at how it would affect street parking? Ms. Dastgheib responded that yes, that is why the street parking data collection was completed to understand occupancy.
- Comment: That is why we should know how many people have access to off-street parking. Ms. Marks responded that you can infer that from the occupancy data when it starts hitting 90% or greater.
- Comment: While the group is looking at residential uses, at the expert panel they discussed how many jurisdictions are moving away from parking ratios per use and instead using parking zones. Ms. Hamer responded that when the study moves to Phase 2 that can be discussed and that the conclusions from Phase 1 can be revisited.
- Question: Can behavior be changed with regard to shared parking? Ms. Hamer responded that it could and that it happens today.

- Comment: JBG uses a lot of shared parking. Ms. Beach asked if Del Ray Central could have shared parking, Mr. Bartley responded that the garage wasn't physically designed that way
- Comment: If there was an app for shared parking, like Air BnB, perhaps it would work. Mr. Bartley responded that it's more of a security issue.
- Comment: Safety in a residential parking garage is a standard concern. Whole Foods on Duke Street has shared (retail/residential) parking garage, but that the residential parking is separated.
- Question: Can the group get more information about shared parking data and studies? Ms. Dastgheib responded that the Shared Parking Manual has analysis and staff can share that information with the Task Force. Ms. Beach added that data from Montgomery County and Arlington would also be helpful.

Mr. Macek adjourned the meeting at 9:02 pm.

The next Task Force meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 14, 2014 at 7PM.